

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 11 are currently pending in the application. Claims 12 - 32 are cancelled without prejudice to the filing of a divisional application. By the foregoing, claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10 are amended. The amended claims are supported by the originally filed application and contain no new matter. Paragraphs [0002] and [0003] have been deleted. An amended Application Data Sheet is enclosed herewith to reflect the priority information listed in paragraphs [0002] and [0003].

Interview

The Examiner is thanked for granting an interview with the Applicant's representative on December 15, 2004. During the interview, German reference 892 561 was discussed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112

In the Action, claims 3, 5, 6, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant has amended these claims to more distinctly claim the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under § 112 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102

Claims 1 - 10 were rejected in the Action under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by German reference 892 561 (DT '561). The Action states that the device of DT '561 teaches an engagement portion 1/5, a fastening portion having a hole 9, an axial projection 23 and a weight saving cavity. The Action also states that portions 1/5 and 9 are considered to comprise a plurality of structural units.

Applicants respectfully disagree. As stated in the enclosed Declaration at paragraph 8, DT '561 discloses a device for fastening a chain ring to a pedal crank of a bicycle. A pedal crank 7/8 is fastened to the device 1 which in turn has a chain ring 11, 13 bolted to it.

The present invention claims a "sprocket support member for a bicycle sprocket assembly comprising at least one engagement portion having at least one tooth engagable with a splined surface of a bicycle freewheel and at least one fastening portion arranged in a radially external position with respect to the engagement portion, the fastening portion presenting at least one hole for the mounting of at least one sprocket to the sprocket support member wherein the fastening portion is axially displaced with respect to the engagement portion." This is not taught or suggested by DT '561. As further stated in the Declaration at paragraphs 10 - 12, the fastening device of DT '561 is used with a pedal crank that attaches to a spindle of the bottom bracket and a chainring, and does not disclose any means for coupling with a bicycle freewheel. As shown in Figure 2, the present invention comprises a splined engagement with a plurality of "teeth" 35 that engage

a splined surface of a bicycle freewheel. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is respectfully requested.

Claim 11 was rejected by the Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over DT '561 in view U.S. Patent No. 6,102,821 to Nakamura. The Action states that DT '561 teaches substantially all that is claimed, but is unclear what the support is made of. The Action further states that Nakamura discloses that aluminum is a typical material for a sprocket support.

Further to the above arguments regarding DT '561, since DT '561 is to a device for attaching a chainring to a pedal crank, there is no motivation to combine DT '561 with Nakamura. Nakamura describes a multiple sprocket assembly having one or more sprocket subassemblies. Under 35 U.S.C. § 103, the claimed invention must be considered as a whole and the references must be considered as a whole and must suggest the desirability and thus the obviousness of making the claimed invention. As stated in the Declaration at paragraphs 14 - 15, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have the motivation to combine the device for mounting a chainring to a pedal crank of DT '561 with the multiple sprocket assembly of Nakamura. Therefore, the Action has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is respectfully requested.


If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, or that a telephone interview will help to materially advance the prosecution of this

application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application, including claims 1 - 11, is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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